

	Outcomes:	Markers of Success:	Key Achievements:
E		<p>1a. Better connectivity, improved reliability and well maintained transport networks creating an environment where businesses are supported to thrive and grow</p>	<p>Key achievements are certainly hitting the target number of business assists as outlined in our UKSPF delivery contract.</p> <p>The team also has a strong pipeline of business working through their EOI forms for our SME Productivity Grant, as well as an uptick in referrals to the local SME Energy Audit service, part of the regional Decarbonisation & Net Zero Programme, delivered by Pro Enviro as part of the Black Country Industrial Cluster.</p> <p>Other key achievements include the successful launch and delivery of the Start Up Walsall programme, delivered by the Black Country Chamber of Commerce, which saw 21 pre and start-up businesses take advantage of the fully funded, classroom and 1-1 based programme.</p> <p>Q4 23/24 also saw the successful relaunch of the Walsall Borough Economic Forum (WBEF) with attendance from Jhoots Pharmacy, Walsall FC, ASSA ABLOY, WHG, Black Country Chamber, Enoch Evans LLP and RAC.</p> <p>Progress was also made on the legal aspects of the soon to be commissioned Walsall High Growth Business Programme, aimed at supporting SMEs with high growth potential across the borough.</p>
	<p>1. Supporting a dynamic, resilient and diverse economy where businesses invest and everyone has the right jobs and the right housing in the right place</p>	<p>1b. Regenerating the borough to support places where people are proud to live and work, delivering affordable homes and attracting inward investment</p>	<p>The Employment and Skills Team continue to deliver support predominantly to unemployed residents through a number of employability programmes, namely our own Walsall Works, Multiply and Restart programmes, and this is in an aim to reduce the volume of unemployed who are universal benefit claimants (both actively seeking work and those who are employed in low income). In the current year these programmes are resourced through the CWG and SPF grant funded programmes which have specific outcomes and outputs. These include the measure of outcomes for specific demographic groups, claimants on certain benefit types, specialist support offered, progression to work, support to training, signposting to health services, job starts and sustainable employment.</p> <p>The steady flow of job listings means that there is opportunity for all and particularly benefit claimants, although it is noted there may be some mis-matches between jobs available, entry qualification requirements and the skills levels and aspiration of jobseekers. The ratio of jobs to those actively seeking is currently 1:2 as we currently have 4,772 unique job listings the month of February vs 9600 benefit claimants. This suggests there is competition for work if all those seeking had the required qualifications and skills. However, the reality is that those people seeking work maybe competing with more qualified and experienced applicants from both within and outside the borough.</p> <p>During the quarter period, the main focus was to utilise the vacancies secured through employer engagement and those advertised through jobsites. Whilst job outcomes were achieved, its difficult to understand why the claimant count is still rising and especially for those who are young claimants so we can only assume the ongoing migration of existing claimants on other benefit types to the Universal Credit intensive work regime is continuous. We are very pro-active in aiming to match our participants to relevant and local opportunities. We actively promote our weekly Job Clubs than run every Tuesday and Thursday. Sectors that we have targeted include job growth opportunities locally: Manufacturing, Construction, Health and Social Care, Warehousing, Logistics, Retail, Hospitality. Regular group information sessions are held to promote and on average at least 10 attendees will participate ever week. This quarter we conducted some specific collaborative recruitment and group information sessions with employer and partners for the job roles set out below.</p> <p>Collaborative working with Employers and Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Staffs Water / Echo Managed Services - Customer Service Advisor vacancies • Opus People Solutions – Various Walsall Council vacancies • Grantrow Recruitment – Various vacancies • Starting Point Recruitment – Various vacancies

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steps 2 Work EE Team / Sharing of vacancies • Serco EE Team (Restart) - One Stop vacancies – Warehouse / Retail • Sharing of opportunities with DWP <p>Events & Group Information Sessions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ongoing Job Clubs running every Tuesday and Thursday at Lichfield Street Hub Library. a) School hour friendly opportunities b) Single parents d) Seasonal fallouts / rapid response 2. Supported with X 4 South Staffs Water / Echo Managed Services Customer Service Assessment Days – 11/01/24, 08/02/24, 21/03/24 & 04/04/24. 3. Willenhall Chart Jobs Fair - 24/01/24 4. Waste Operative, Grounds Maintenance & Environmental Driver information Session with Opus People Solutions - 06/02/24 5. Apprenticeships Event - 08/02/24 6. Walsall Works Expo - 14/03/24 7. WHG / NHS Recruitment and Awareness Event 26/03/24
	<p>2. Education, training and skills enable people to contribute to their community and our economy</p>	<p>2a. Provide access to education, apprenticeships and training to improve productivity and skills</p>	<p>The E&S Team supported various activities during apprenticeship week in February 2024 and held their own event on 14 February. Over 200 Walsall customers interested in finding out and applying for Apprenticeships attended this bespoke event and exhibitors presented on the day included Fairlawns Hotel, Amey, McGinley, Walsall College, HS2, DWP, West Midlands Police, Lauren Broxton Design and WM Jobs. There was a real buzz to the event where more than 150 applications/expressions of interest were made as well as on-line application details shared.</p> <p>The Councils commitment to apprenticeships is long standing and aligns to the pledge made when Walsall Works was launched in 2012 to tackle youth unemployed by creating new apprenticeships through a subsidised grant. The Council also understands the challenge we have in growing the skills levels of the working age population in the borough, and how a well designed apprenticeship can help to improve skills for the young person and also how this could improve workforce development and skills.</p> <p>During this year, local authorities lobbied with the WMCA to any residual SPF funding to be spent on targeting support to young people. During this year a new pre-apprenticeship programme was designed in consultation with young people and partner organisations in order to support young people who may not have the entry requirements of a full apprenticeship. The new Paths 2 Apprenticeship programme is being piloted and delivered by three commissioned training providers in the borough who will identify employer who are willing to employ new apprentices. The Path 2 Apprenticeship programme will offer 4-16 weeks of pre-apprenticeship support to prepare young people aged 19-29 year olds into a full apprenticeship paying national minimum rates of pay.</p> <p>The rationale for supporting and lobbying for this intervention was that Walsall still presents with a high volume of working age adults not possessing any qualifications, and shows there are nearly 17,000 (9%) adults having no qualifications. At a higher level, only 27% of adults hold a higher Level 4 qualification. The biggest skills deficit is still around digital skills with 56% of working adults not having the right skills fit for work. This coupled with sector shortages in construction, retail, health care, logistics and professional services, creates the ideal opportunity to actively promote the creation of apprenticeships for adults to employers to help people without the relevant professional skills to enter the workforce and develop the skills whilst working.</p>

		<p>2b. Reducing unemployment through collaborative working with employers and partners</p>	<p>Walsall Council continues to lead by example through its internal apprenticeship programme, Endless Possibilities, and the authority won the prestigious 'Large Employer of the Year' in a number of recent awards</p> <p>We have further strengthened our relationship with statutory and partner organisations in an endeavour to engage our disengaged unemployed residents and to provide a more co-ordinated employment offer to residents. We are seeing a healthy number of referrals from the DWP, The Link, Family Hubs, Community Organisations and direct referrals from our marketing on social media and website.</p> <p>However, despite our collaboration there is no progress on reduction of the unemployment figures over the last quarter and over the year we note the increase of 220 young claimants, whilst the number of older claimants has decreased ie 50+ age group.</p> <p>Pre-pandemic rates in January 2020, show the number of claimants was only 7,970 people so whilst all our collaboration locally and government funding / investment in various new interventions post EU funding ceasing, we have not yet recovered back to these lower rates of unemployment. However this is typical to the rest of the country who are also not fully recovered and external factors have played a significant contribution to poor economic growth and high unemployment ie Ukraine war, energy and fuel prices, inflation, rising interest rates.</p> <p>Full migration of claimants from legacy benefits to Universal Credit will complete in Walsall by March 2025, so its likely the Universal Credit claimants actively seeking employment will continue to slightly increase, rather than decrease. From March 2025, we will be able to assess the true difference our joint collaboration is having.</p> <p>When comparing our rates to the UK average currently at 3.9%, Walsall has 5.6% of its working age unemployed which is slightly above the regional average of 5.1%. The heat map of the Walsall borough below shows the highest concentration of jobseekers residing in St Mathews, Birchills Leamore, and Pleck areas.</p>
<p>P</p>	<p>3. People can access support in their community to keep safe and well and remain independent at home</p>	<p>3a. People are supported to build on their strengths and those in their communities to maintain and/or maximise their independence.</p>	<p>The mental health team has successfully supported people to step down from long stay hospitals and rehab settings, enabling them to live more independently and access opportunities for employment and education. The team has received positive feedback from clients and their families, who have reported improved quality of life, well-being, and recovery. The team has demonstrated effective partnership working with the Black Country Foundation Trust and other agencies, ensuring coordinated and holistic care for clients with complex needs. The team is seeking to expand its staff and skill mix, to meet the growing and varied needs of its client group. The team is exploring new ways of working with partners, such as co-location, joint training, and shared protocols, to enhance communication and coordination. The four locality teams achieved 100% of their annual reviews by the end of Q4, ensuring that care needs are effectively met in the least restrictive way and involving the person in the decision making process.</p> <p>Quarter 4 saw the implementation of the Bridgit Care free winter trial to support unpaid carers via the provision of support and self-help resources. To date, 2,358 Walsall carers have accessed the app with 393 carer interactions, with the majority accessing information and guidance around benefits guidance, carers allowance information, carers assessment information, the provision of care, being a carer for a family member and dementia care.</p> <p>Quarter 4 has seen a number of positive achievements and areas of growth that has built on the ongoing work that has been undertaken throughout the year within Provider Services, with 114 referrals coming into the service during Q4.</p>

		<p>Employment: - this service has seen an increase in the number of people being supported, which has resulted in a further 22 during quarter 4 achieving their goals in terms of securing employment, returning to education, or gaining further skills through training. Many of these positive outcomes have been as a result of some excellent partnership working involving colleges, employers and colleagues across the service and wider directorates.</p> <p>Outreach: - continues to support young people from 16 years old upwards with the wraparound support available from across Provider Services. Quarter 4 has seen an increase in the number of referrals received into the service from Childrens and Adults services, with real progress being made on outcome focussed support. The service continues to expand with the majority of staff now having completed an accredited independent travel training qualification. This enables the team to support those individuals preparing for adulthood and older, to travel independently.</p> <p>Embedding of Brain in Hand's digital support is continuing across the directorate to support people to become more independent with decision making, anxiety, memory difficulties and managing unexpected situations. The team can receive referrals from any practitioner within the council where the person is 14 and over and may benefit from the use of this assistive technology.</p> <p>The just checking monitoring system has seen a significant rise during the year with demand doubling compared to the previous year. The shared lives scheme also continues to develop with the acquisition of a new carer joining the scheme in quarter 4.</p> <p>The commissioning process has begun engaging with providers on fees and market sustainability as part of a three-year plan. So far, approximately 70% of in-borough providers have been involved, and the engagement is ongoing. The goal is to agree on a fee structure that eliminates the need for fee variations while supporting the development of a diverse, sustainable, and high-quality sector.</p>	
	<p>3b. People feel safe in their home and community</p>		<p>DoLS waiting list continues to reduce, despite increasing demand, with the backlog by the end of quarter 4 standing at 216. This is 36% decrease on the 336 outstanding at the end of 2022/23.</p> <p>The four locality teams achieved 100% of their annual reviews by the end of Q4, ensuring that care needs are effectively met in the least restrictive way and involving the person in the decision making process.</p> <p>The learning disability team have moved to a named worker model of support to promote an individualised person centred approach that emphasises continuity and familiarity.</p> <p>The introduction of a bimonthly audit cycle is seeing a good return of cases.</p> <p>Relationships and jointly worked updates to funding policies and procedures are being strengthened with ICB partners. Use of new tool "Access Adam" will facilitate less time being taken up in disputes and help to prevent escalation.</p>
	<p>4a. People know how to maintain or improve their health and wellbeing and get timely support for this, where required.</p>		<p>N/a</p>

	4. People are supported to maintain or improve their health, wellbeing and quality of life	4b. People can access timely social care support and reablement to prevent a hospital admission or facilitate a timely discharge	<p>The 95% target for people remaining in the community following an admission intervention was achieved due to the low number of bedded placements (Pathway 2 & 3) made. Significant increase (from 1,201 to 1,087) in the discharge to the community number.</p> <p>It should be noted that 5 of the people were placed into rehabilitation (Pathway 2) beds with the potential to be discharged home following this intervention. We need to implement a reporting mechanism around whether people who are placed into Pathway 2 beds are subsequently discharged home. It is likely that the Pathway 3 (1.75%) placements will result in long term care home placements.</p>
I	5. We get things right, first time and make all services accessible and easy to use	5a. Services will be accessible and easy to use with improved customer satisfaction	Customer Satisfaction January to March 2024 91.74% and NPS 76. Both our NPS and CSAT is consistently above industry standards.
		5b. Customers and partners report that they would recommend working with us in the future	This measure is being re-evaluated and therefore has no feedback
	6. The Council will deliver trusted, customer focused, and enabling services, which are recognised by customers and our partners for the value they bring	6a. Services will provide value for money measured through delivery of outcomes within agreed resources	Identification of mitigating actions has been a key success.
		6b. Services are trusted and customer focused measured through staff satisfaction/ engagement scores.	N/a
C	7. Children and young people thrive emotionally, physically, mentally and feel they are achieving their potential	7a. Children and young people have access to high quality education and training opportunities and schools are more inclusive	<p>Walsall is now broadly inline with the national average for the % of schools which have been judged to be good or better. We aim to be better than national when our RI/inadequate schools are inspected in line with Ofsted's inspection schedule.</p> <p>Establishment of Walsall Learning Alliance 'exclusions' sub group with a focus on 'belonging' to give strategic oversight for suspensions, exclusions and wider inclusion to support pupils remaining in schools and settings.</p>
		7b. Children and young people with additional needs or in specific circumstances are identified and supported to have their health and education needs met.	<p>There is now a dedicated NEET worker within the virtual school that is focussing on a specific young people that have been identified for being able to find work, education or training.</p> <p>The NAG group oversees and tracks all of the young people that are NEET and so we know which young people that we need to target.</p> <p>Walsall works and the virtual school do drop ins from the hub and are based within the service twice a week.</p> <p>DWP are also joining this group and will be offering additional support at the hub one day a week.</p> <p>There are monthly meetings in place with Group Managers and the CIC health nurse to ensure that there is monitoring of the health assessments and that all children in care have an up-to-date health assessment.</p> <p>Decision Making Processes for EHC Assessments are more robust and effective leading to more timely decisions at 6 and 16 weeks.</p>
	8. Children grow up in connected communities and feel safe everywhere	8a. Services and support is responsive to needs of different communities, partners are proactive in responding to these	he Right Help, Right Time threshold guidance has been revised and launched in February 2024. The revised guidance focuses on having the right conversations and identifying and

		<p>needs and children and families have easier and timelier access to services.</p>	<p>responding to need at the earliest opportunity. The RHRT guidance aligns with the supporting families programme priorities and has a stronger emphasis on earliest help and single agency support where this is appropriate, meaning more children, young people and their families should receive the right help at the earliest time.</p> <p>The percentage of social work Child and Family Assessments remains consistent and above regional and national comparators. As a service, we have retained a level of stability and been able to support and develop staff to provide the foundations for practice in this area.</p>
		<p>8b. Children and families are better connected with community resources to enable them to build resilience, are involved in developing their plans and can provide regular feedback.</p>	<p>The Family Safeguarding Model has now been established for over 3.5 years, and provides a high level of support to families where children are on statutory Child in Need and Child Protection Plans to avoid children coming into care. This continues to have a positive impact in respect of the proportion of children entering into care being from families open due to safeguarding concerns within the family - there will always be a need for this for some children, but we seek to ensure the most support possible has been provided to avoid this.</p> <p>Walsall's implementation of the Family Safeguarding Model has been the subject of a peer review from the Centre for Family Safeguarding, and received significant positive feedback. We have seen an decrease in the duration of care over the past two quarters, indicating that pre proceedings have been effective and meaning that permanency is secured for children who cannot remain with their families promptly.</p> <p>Walsall's Participation Strategy is focused on making sure children's and young people's voices are heard, and this is reflected in the data on Child Protection Conferences and Child in Care Reviews.</p> <p>There has been an increase in children participation in child protection conference and child in care reviews.</p>
<p>C</p>	<p>9. Our communities will be more resilient and supportive of each other</p>	<p>9a. There will be a vibrant and diverse community and voluntary sector providing help and support where people need it with a range of volunteering opportunities</p>	<p>Walsall Community Network (WCN) were successful in their bid to manage the Wider Determinants of Health Funds from the Black Country Healthcare NHS during 23/24 and 24/25. Following a successful away day, WCN members discussed their future priorities and will be looking at the marketing and promotion of the sector. Walsall Libraries are currently developing a proposal for increasing partnership with diverse VCS/communities in running Walsall libraries and book exchanges. A number of best practice visits are taking place with Warwickshire, Staffordshire and Suffolk, who are the national leaders in transforming the libraries. A conference is planned for 7 October, focused on innovation and 'Reimagining Library spaces'.</p>
		<p>9b. Trust will be built within and between communities across the Borough</p>	<p>The key priorities were identified through the consultation which will be included in an action plan and Cohesion strategy codesigned with Walsall for All and published alongside the Council's EDI Strategy. Race Equality Task Force (WMCA) awarded a Walsall based organisation, AAINA, a substantial grant to support women who are furthest from job market into work. Walsall has received positive feedback from WMCA for their involvement in a number of initiatives, such as Race Equality Skills Week in Feb 24 and promoting leadership roles (magistrates, governors, trustees) in ethnically diverse communities) with University of</p>

Cabinet Report - Corporate Plan: Markers of Success Q4 23/24

Appendix 2

Q4 Key Achievements:



			Birmingham Exchange. All Race Equality Task force work is monitored via Walsall for All. Other important achievements include setting up of the Walsall Community Resilience Network (for Contest) and increasing diversity of the International Women's Day celebrations with many inter-cultural events across the borough.
10. People are proud of their vibrant town, districts and communities	10a. The Borough's streets are clean, green and welcoming, with more waste recycled and less going to landfill		Key achievements in 2023/24 include completing the designs for the new Waste Transfer Station and Household Waste Recycling Centre in Middlemore Lane and awarding the contract to build the facility to Morgan Sindall. Construction started in April 2024. The new facilities will enable more materials to be segregated for recycling.
	10b. People feel safe in their local area and anti-social behaviour and crime – particularly environmental crime is reduced		N/a